

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1219

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
State Government & Tribal Affairs

**Title:** An act relating to mailing information to certain members of the state retirement systems.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the department of retirement systems to assist with mailing information to certain members of the state retirement systems.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Green, Armstrong, Hunt, Appleton, Newhouse, Miloscia, Chase, Alexander and Hudgins.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/22/09, 1/29/09 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Authorizes the Department of Retirement Systems to assist qualified public employee retiree organizations in blind mailings to potential retiree organization members twice per year.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Flannigan, Hurst, Miloscia and Newhouse.

**Staff:** Tracey O'Brien (786-7196)

**Background:**

The Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) administers the various public retirement systems. The retirement systems include: the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS); the Teachers' Retirement System (TERS); the School Employees' Retirement System (SERS); the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' System (LEOFF); the Washington State Patrol Retirement System (WSPRS); the Public Safety Employees' Retirement System (PSERS); the Judicial Retirement System (JRS); and the Judges'

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Retirement Fund (JRF). Many of these retirement systems have retirement organizations representing the thousands of public pension system retirees. Examples of these retirement organizations include the Retired Public Employees Council of Washington, the Washington State School Retirees Association, the Retired Firefighters of Washington and the Retired members of the Washington Education Association.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Any organization that exclusively provides representation or services to retired members of the Washington retirement systems and has membership dues deducted through the DRS has a right to request the DRS's assistance in doing blind mailings to retirees two times per year.

Eligible mailings must provide information regarding the organization's services for members of the retirement systems eligible for membership in the retiree organization. The retiree organization must provide all the printed materials and the envelopes to a mail processing center. The retiree organization must also pay all costs for generating the mailing labels, inserting the materials into the envelopes, sealing, labeling and delivering the materials to be mailed to a bulk mail center or post office. The retiree organization must use its own bulk mail permit and pay all postage costs.

The DRS must provide the requested retiree data for addressing the envelopes to the mail center under a secure data share agreement with the mail center. This agreement must provide that the retiree organization or any other entity does not have direct access to the retiree's names or addresses.

The DRS does not have an obligation to approve or disapprove, or in any other way take responsibility for, the content of the mailings.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill clarifies that the recipients of the mailing materials are members of the retirement systems who are eligible for membership in the retiree organization. It also requires the retiree organization to pay the costs associated with generating the mailing labels.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The retiree organizations are nonprofit membership organizations. The only way to get contact information for potential members is through the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS). The organizations have tried private means. Up until 2008, the DRS worked with the organizations to provide blind mailings to retirees with the organizations paying all the costs associated with the mailings. However, a recent comment by the Ethics Board caused the DRS to stop working with the retiree organizations. This bill will allow the practice to resume and continue to protect the individual's data as the organization does not get access to the mailing list -- it is a blind mailing.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Armstrong, prime sponsor; Cassandra de la Rosa, Retired Public Employees Council; Dick Warbrouck, Retired Firefighters of Washington; and Leslie Main, Washington State School Retirees Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.